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ABSTRACT

This annual report discusses the District of Columbia's public schools' activities in a number of areas--special education, bilingual education, reading, optional programs, career development, mathematics, early childhood education, student services, curriculum development, child nutrition programs, adult education, research and evaluation, staff development security, safety, budget and finance, educational facilities, and teacher certification and licensing. (IRT)

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MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Annual Report of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia for 1976

Vincent E. Reed
Superintendent of Schools

EA 008 840

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"I believe that every child has the ability to learn. We must build on this positive assumption. School personnel have the responsibility to facilitate learning and to provide a variety of educational experiences which will enable every student to fulfill his personal goals and his obligation to the society in which he lives."

Foreword

All of us recognize that school year 1975-76 was difficult and brought great stress to bear on the system, both from within and without. In spite of this, we have attempted in every way to protect the classroom and our most precious responsibility, the children, from the disruptive effects of our administrative problems.

Once again, local school administrative staff and teachers have borne the burden of the system, carrying on the essential business of the schools throughout this year.

During the year we have attempted to maintain primary emphasis on the children and their needs. We sought to achieve essential levels of service to the children and at the same time lay the groundwork for the changes and improvements that must be made throughout the system, at all levels and in every area.

A primary determination of the administration has been to draw upon the resources of the system itself. We do not think that the solution to our problem lies outside; no one has a ready answer; no one has the magic formula. It is the people whose lives and careers are bound up with this school system who are indispensable to its success, who must make up the heart and soul of any purposive change.

Moving into this period of change, we attempted to strengthen that bond with the heart of the school system. An integral part of all of our efforts has been the restoration of the confidence of the system in itself, and consequently the restoration of the confidence of the community in us.

This report covers a short but very active period in the life of the school system. It attempts to describe for the Board and the community what happened of significance during that period, and what was accomplished, and thereby describe the present status of the school system. The accomplishments are not presented as ends in themselves, but as indicators of a larger plan for what must be done this year and over many years if the school system is to serve this community and its children as we all wish them to be served.

We have defined our goals and aspirations and the principles by which we intend to pursue them. We must now come together ourselves to bring these aspirations to reality. We must renew each day our commitment to the meaningful education of children.

Vincent E. Reed

Superintendent of Schools

SPECIAL EDUCATION

. . . serving students with exceptional needs

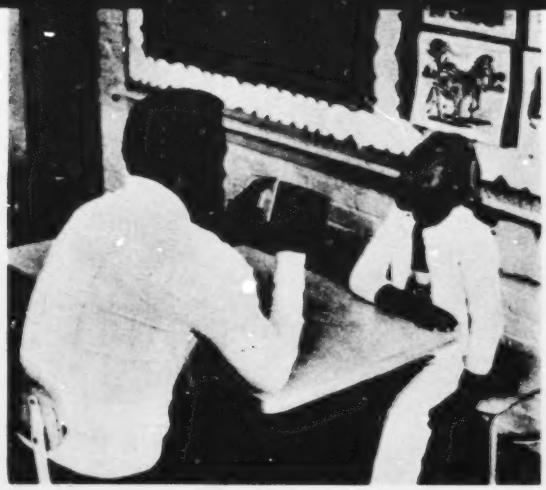
Special education in the District of Columbia has been molded during the past school year 1975-1976 by five major events. These same events promise to have even farther reaching effects during the coming school year.

The implementation of the FY 76 Special Education Operating Plan is the greatest achievement. It was prepared for submission to the Court in response to a pending non-compliance action with respect to the Mills Decree and outlined the general direction which the education of handicapped children in the District of Columbia would take. As laid out in the plan, an extensive child-find and outreach was conducted through the use of flyers printed in five languages and in braille and through the public media by use of newspaper ads, television, and radio announcements. Over 14,000 students received full or part-time special education services in one of 24 different types of programs and services operated during the past year within the Public Schools. In addition, 70 federally funded projects operated in support of these programs, as well as programs for the handicapped in either public or private agencies. This school year all public programs serving handicapped children in the District of Columbia were monitored by a special team from the Division of Special Education.

Because the District of Columbia had failed to make strides great enough in the provision of educational services and programs for the handicapped, the court appointed a special master for the Mills Decree. His appointment and subsequent investigations and constructive criticisms provided a second great impetus to the development and delivery of special education services during this past year. In response to the appointment of a special master, the Mayor appointed a blue ribbon panel, his Ad Hoc Committee for the Implementation of the Mills Decree. This committee is comprised of top level City, Public School, and DHR administrators and members of the Board of Education. With the special master's assistance, newer approaches to programmatic and placement services were investigated. Subsequently, more effective service delivery models were developed and implemented.

The issuance of a specific process and procedure for the identification, referral, and placement of handicapped students is representative of such updating and constitutes a third major force in the development and delivery of special education programs in the City. Originally outlined in the FY 76 Operating Plan, the referral and placement procedures were updated and reissued twice during the past year. The most recent, the Superintendent's Directive 503.1, provides a non-discriminatory method for the identification, referral and placement of handicapped students in the Public Schools or in private tuition grant programs which represent the least restrictive educational environment in which specified needs can be met. In keeping with the spirit and intent of P.L. 94-142, the procedures seek to ensure that children are not referred who do not need special education. Furthermore, they ensure that assessment and placement are made in a timely and consistent manner. Case conference and parental involvement are critical factors added to ensure that the rights of students are not violated.

P.L. 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, is a major stimulus to the development of Special Education's programs and support services. This law requires that a free public supported education be provided to all handicapped children between the ages of 3-21 years by 1980. It further stipulates that each child be placed in the least restrictive educational environment, that needs be determined according to non-discriminatory methods and that an annual individualized educational program be provided. Parents are to be intricately involved in the entire identification, placement and program planning strategies. Confidentiality and due process are to be afforded all children, and all



Instructor uses audio equipment as a teaching aid.

steps must be taken to ensure that access to and protection of these rights are ensured. The Division of Special Education has undergone an internal reorganization to enable it to better implement and operate under the provisions of this law. As the State Education Agency, SEA, it has reorganized in keeping with requirements of federal law to provide general supervision to all programs, public and private, which provide special education to handicapped children through the support of the State and/or federal dollars.

The Rules of the Board of Education passed in November 1975 were the fifth milestone in this year's special education service delivery. These rules expanded eligibility age limits for the education of handicapped students from three to twenty-one years by the fall of 1979. Furthermore, the rules provide a statement of procedures for placement of students into tuition facilities and a policy on the transportation of handicapped students.

A specialized team of special education resource teachers conducted a series of workshops in the area of behavior management in each of the junior high schools. A State Learning Resource Center for the Handicapped was established to provide the entire special educational professional community with updated and readily available information on methods, techniques and strategies for the education of the handicapped.

Each full-time special education program, including public and private facilities receiving federal money, was monitored at least once during the year. Reports were submitted to the schools, their respective regions, and the State Office of Special Education. In cases where the need was indicated technical assistance was provided through discipline and direct supervision, assistance in program or curriculum development, planning for staff development, and proposal writing, implementation and evaluation.

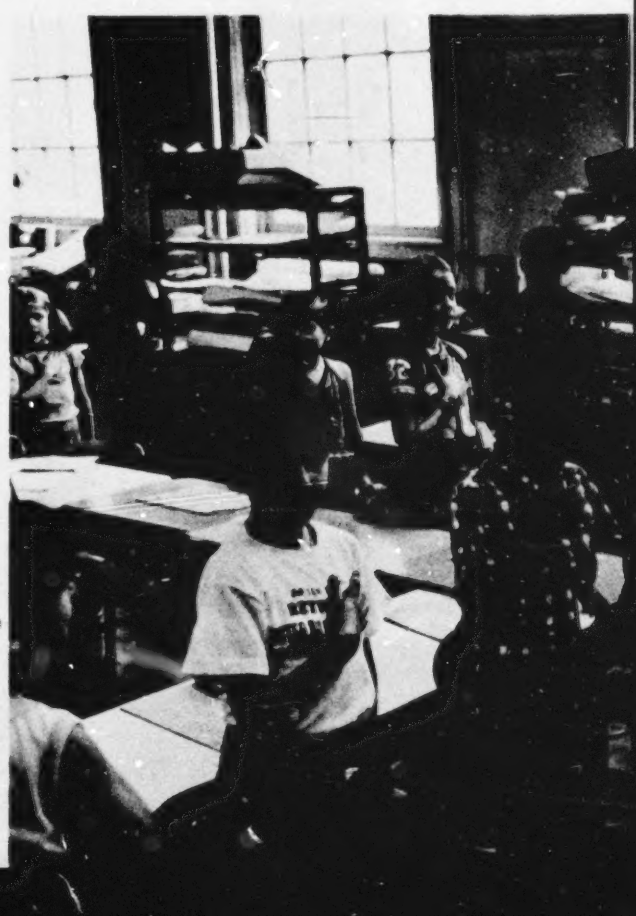
. . . closing the communications gap

The school system has been providing services to students who speak languages other than English since 1971, when the Bilingual Program began operating in three schools. Since that time, the program has expanded to offer direct instructional services to students in seven elementary and five secondary schools. The creation of the Division of Bilingual Education has enabled limited English-speaking students throughout the school system to receive assistance.

During the 1975-76 school year, the division geared its efforts towards increasing and improving its services to all segments of the school population who experience difficulties in adjusting to our educational system due to cultural and linguistic differences. In January 1974, the Supreme Court, in the case of Lau vs. Nichols, ruled that no child may be excluded from a meaningful education because he/she speaks a language other than English. This division, therefore, must provide the necessary services to these students and disseminate information to all those concerned.

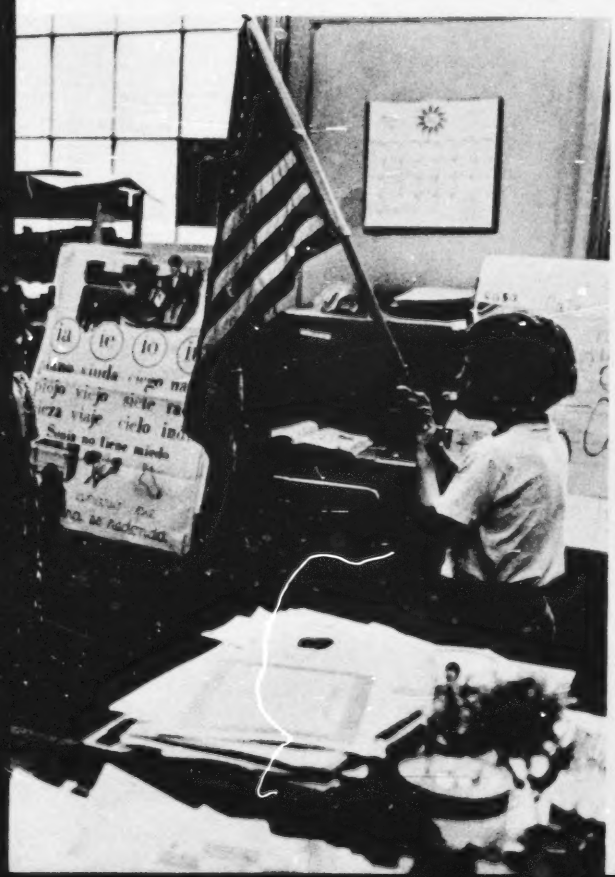
In an effort to determine the particular needs of the limited English-speaking ability students and to comply with Court requirements, a district-wide "Language and Cultural Heritage Survey" was conducted during the past school year. The report on this survey details the linguistic and cultural situation of 1,835 students who speak languages other than English. This is the first time the Public Schools has had an accurate count of the number and location of its limited English-speaking students.

Program services were expanded this year. A Chinese component was added to the existing Spanish component of the Bilingual Program. A Chinese school-community coordinator and six tutors have been providing assistance to Chinese students and their teachers throughout the District. In addition, a grant from the U. S. Office of Education permitted the creation of an Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program. This program has helped Vietnamese and Cambodian students adjust to our educational system. Another innovation was the introduction of a bilingual music program at Oyster and Morgan Elementary Schools.



Bilingual education prepares children for participation in American life.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION



In an effort to provide information on the services provided by this division, several projects were begun this year. For those students and community members who do not speak English, the Spanish/ Chinese News and Information Telephone Line was established. Weekly recordings provide information on school and community activities to Spanish and Cantonese-speaking students and parents. A second project, still in tne initial stages, is the development of basic informational pamphlets to be translated into different languages and distributed to all non-English-speaking students and parents. These pamphlets will contain information about the rules, regulations and other important items concerning the Public Schools in order to facilitate the adjustment of these students to the school system.

In May 1976, the division sponsored its First Annual Conference on Bilingual Education for teachers, administrators, and community members from the metropolitan area. Over 150 people attended workshops throughout the day on numerous topics related to the education of limited English-speaking students.

As the Bilingual Program expands, there is an increasing need for a uniform bilingual education curriculum for grades K-6 and for the secondary level. The Division of Bilingual Education is coordinating the development of these curricula. On the elementary level, field testing of the Spanish Vernacular and the Spanish as a Second Language curricula will begin in September 1976 with two pilot classes. On the secondary level, work is continuing on the English as a Second Language and transitional program (Social Studies and Mathematics in Spanish). Initial drafts of the other elementary and the secondary curricula will be available during the coming school year.

READING. . . learning to be free

Every teacher in the District of Columbia Public Schools is a reading teacher. This assumption has received encouragement and support through a Board of Education resolution making reading a priority in the curriculum through certification requirements that teachers will have taken courses in the teaching of reading and most especially through direct assistance to the classroom teacher. The latter effort is aided by funds from a federal Right To Read grant.

The Public Schools Right To Read Office (RTRO) is responsible for citywide reading services, kindergarten through adult. During the school year 1975-76 the Right To Read Office headed the State Agency Task Force, a group composed of persons responsible for existing reading programs, in a study of current programs to assess needs and reorder priorities.

The year was also marked by the development of a comprehensive assessment of needs in the area of reading; the generation of proposals to secure funding for special emphasis (intensive) instructional projects, reading academies for adults, reading improvement projects, kindergarten through grade 6; and a set of Standards of Excellence against which reading programs may measure themselves.

One of the most widely publicized efforts in recent years was the television reading project entitled "Vanishing Shadow." Designed by the RTRO and implemented in cooperation with WTOP, the prime-time telecast, shown during March and April, involved more than 16,000 students and 400 teachers.

At school year's end a number of reading-oriented materials were in preparation for printing: Reading Through Poetry, a Parent Handbook, a Handbook for Teaching Life-Related Performance Tasks, an Informal Reading Inventory for Classroom Use, Games for Teaching Reading, Bright Ideas from Right To Read for Parents (a monthly leaflet for students and parents), and a quarterly newsletter. By late June summer plans were already made for the development of a competency based reading curriculum by teacher writing teams with the assistance of nationally recognized curriculum consultants.

The effectiveness of our reading programs, measured in terms of increasing individual reading competencies, turns on acceptance of the idea that teaching reading is a transdisciplinary obligation, that reading is learning to be free.

Through reading they learn to be free.

OPTIONAL PROGRAMS

. . ."different strokes for different folks"

Alternative programs have sprung up across our country as an effort to respond to the complex and individual needs of students. A number of optional programs are offered in the Public Schools as a partial answer for the many students for whom the existing programs may not be fully appropriate. Through these programs the school system provides experiences for those who have special talents, interests, or abilities; who are underachievers; who have failed repeatedly; or who have dropped out of school. Through these programs, too, we have sought to find new and more efficient educational approaches and to offer demonstration models for successful school programs. Programs continuing in FY 1976 from previous years include the following:

CAREER EDUCATION SKILLS CENTERS
Vocational and technical career training as well as academic skills and college preparation are offered.

MC KINLEY HIGH SCHOOL
Art, music and engineering as career specialties are offered in a high school setting to talented students throughout the City.

SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS HIGH SCHOOL
A moveable instructional setting is provided and classes are held in universities, places of business, industry, the courts, the Congress, scientific laboratories, and museums.

SPINGARN STAY HIGH SCHOOL
The Spingarn School to Aid Youth was begun in 1965. The program also occupies space in Phelps Vocational High School. Providing academic training and career guidance during the evening hours, STAY serves school dropouts between 16 and 21 years of age.

WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS
Recognized professionals in music, dance, and art give students with identified artistic potential the opportunity to develop their talents and explore careers in the arts while maintaining academic skills and college preparation.

K-7 AND K-8 SCHOOLS
In the past school year several elementary schools have extended their programs beyond the traditional sixth grade. Seven schools are now K-7: Eaton, Hardy, Brent, Merritt, Lenox, West, and Takoma. Two are K-8: Brookland and Mott.

WOODSON HIGH SCHOOL HUMANISTIC STUDIES CURRICULUM
Academically talented students are furnished a challenging course of studies in literature, music, art, science and other classical courses. This interdisciplinary program has been funded by ESEA Title III and the National Endowment for Humanities.

The school year 1976 marked the first year of operation for still other optional programs such as:

BALLOU MATHEMATICS/SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL

Operating with approximately 140 ninth and tenth grade students, the Math/Science High School in its first year was selected to work with the National Technical Association Career Awareness Institute (architects and engineers). Science careers are explored and students are given intensive academic interdisciplinary instruction.

FRIENDSHIP EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Opened and just getting underway is the Friendship Educational Center at Oxon Run.

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (HI/SCIP)

Funded by the Office of Education, the program permits students to complete high school while earning college credits at Howard University or the Washington Technical Institute.

RANDALL AEROSPACE/MARINE SCIENCE SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL (RAMS)

Phasing in a high school in the Southwest quadrant, the RAMS program taps the area's resources and the involvement of community residents and agencies. Marine and aviation skills are taught and career opportunities are explored.

WASHINGTON HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Built as a community school, Washington Highlands provides a curriculum in health care, child care, and food distribution. A full range of academic and supporting services is provided for community adults and children from early morning until night.

In general, the programs have sought increased attendance, improved academic achievement, a reduction of disruptive incidents, and the exploration and development of talent. The programs are characterized by a heavy emphasis upon basic skills, attitudinal changes, career education, and experience-based learning.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Lemuel A. Penn Center

During the 1975-76 school year significant advances were made in program growth, student interest and participation in vocational-technical education programs in the District of Columbia. Approximately 18,500 students benefited from programs offered at the secondary, post-secondary and adult levels.

USE OF CONTEMPORARY OPERATIONAL PATTERNS

Due to the impetus of the 1968 Vocational Education Amendments and the Task Force Report on Vocational Education (May 1969), the District of Columbia embarked upon the redirection and conversion of the Vocational Technical Schools into career development centers with emphasis upon the clustering of occupations.

In order to give the fullest expression to the idea of individualized education, the school system seeks to offer an instructional program broad enough to encompass the career interests and aptitudes of all its students. In the area of vocational-technical education, therefore, our students may choose to pursue careers in trade and industrial education, health occupations, business and office occupations, distributive education, consumer and home economics, and industrial arts. These areas of career exploration and preparation are operational in comprehensive high schools and career centers. The programs in the six centers are organized into occupational clusters at (1) BELL - manufacturing, service industries; (2) BURDICK - business and office, hospitality; (3) CHAMBERLAIN - personal services, business and office; (4) PHELPS - construction, transportation; (5) M. M. WASHINGTON - health, (6) PENN - communications and media.

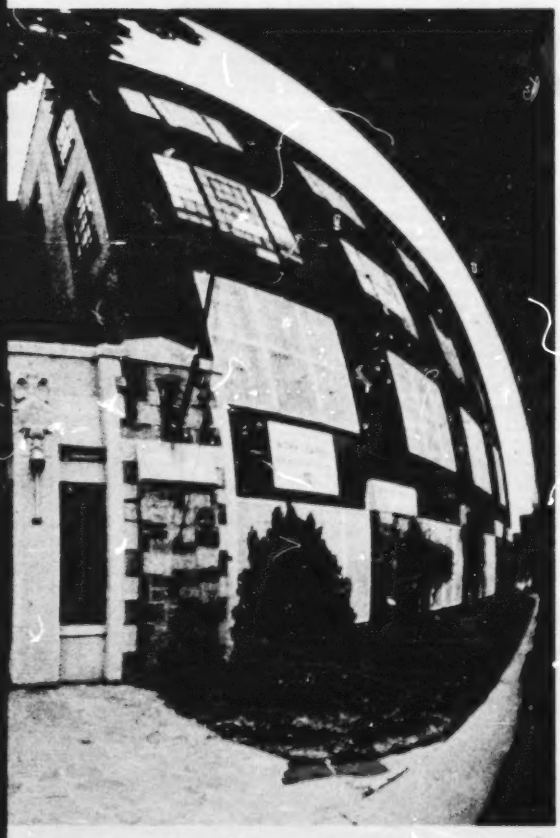
The first of these centers, Lemuel A. Penn, was developed as the model center and began operations during the 1974-75 school year. The center was designed as a shared-time facility, with students receiving the academics at comprehensive high schools and specialized vocational-technical training at the career center.

In addition to the Inter-High Connection, a newspaper written and published by students, a retail outlet was opened to sell the products and creations of career center students. Both the newspaper and the store, also called the Inter-High Connection, are "firsts" for District of Columbia schools. Apart from these efforts, students in the Literary Arts Program brought together a collection of poetry, entitled Roots, and turned out several other publications. Students in the Urban Journalism Workshop produced 1310, a magazine, and a number of brochures.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A contract was negotiated with RCA Education Services to finalize a design for a career development

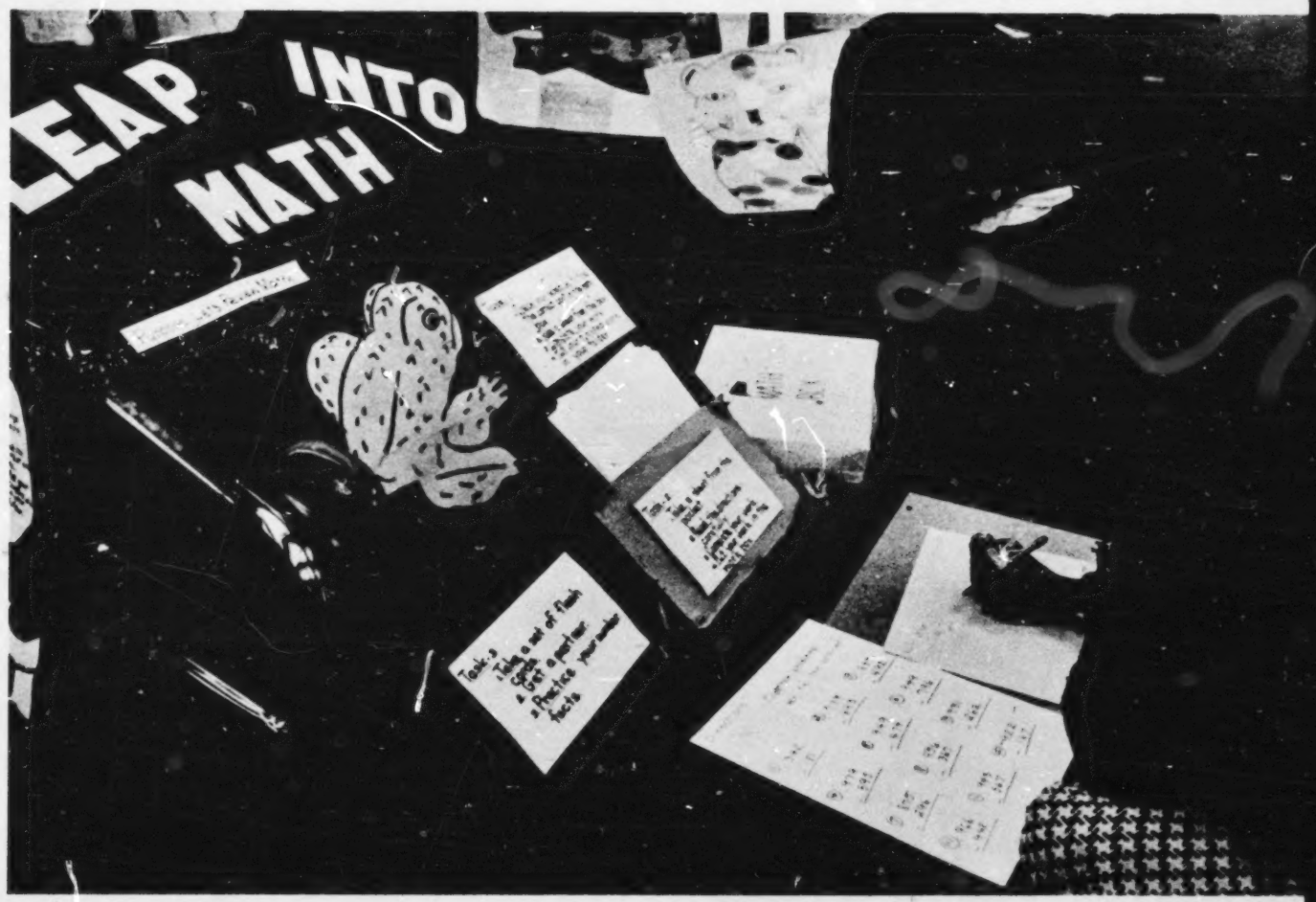
. . . extending career options



program grades 10-12. The contractor was charged to complete four major tasks over a period of a year beginning July 16, 1975. The following tasks were completed:

1. Gathered pertinent information on the overall design of a career development program, including the objectives, course offerings, organization of curricula, and methodology for implementation and evaluation. This task was accomplished by the review of relevant literature, interviews with selected experts, a survey of student needs and views, a study of area manpower needs, and a survey of community views.
2. Formulated the fundamental design of a career development program based upon the results of Task No. 1 and a review of the vocational programs that are currently enacted at the six existing career centers. The program design addresses the following:
   - Preparation for specific occupations and criteria for selection of the occupations;
   - Organization of curriculum including clusters where appropriate;
   - Curriculum outlines for content in each course;
   - Service to be offered in the career development centers;
   - Alternate delivery systems;
   - Counseling, assessment, and guidance services;
   - Plans for eliminating attitudinal obstacles to include the handicapped in regular programs;
   - Plans for providing for non-English speaking persons.
3. Detailed the staffing, space, and equipment requirements for the program based on the completion of Task No. 2. Task No. 3 took in a review of existing facilities, including existing career centers to determine if the facilities were suitable for the program. Task No. 3 included the development of drawings, sketches, models and specifications for the modernization of the six career centers.
4. Developed a ten year phase-in plan that will enumerate the scheduling of events and projected costs for the finalization of the total career development program.

Carrying "the word" about career preparation and options represents an important awareness function followed by more in-depth explorations of vocational possibilities. Mindful of this fact, the division implemented during the summer of 1976 a communications outreach program. A "Career Mobile," which carried the career development story to the community was manned by teacher coordinators and career advisors. The van was parked at over 20 sites to recruit students, provide career counseling, present media displays, and disseminate informational brochures.



A student works independently on a math skill.

MATHEMATICS. . . becoming fluent in the language of numbers

During 1975-76 the mathematics program shared again a prominent place among the school system's instructional priorities. The primary focus continued to center on the need for students to think and communicate in mathematical terms, processes which are essential for successful participation in a super-industrial society.

The general mathematics curriculum, kindergarten through grade 9, seeks to build competencies for effective life functioning and further studies in mathematics. Optional choices in mathematics beyond grade 9 include courses ranging from algebra and geometry through elementary functions and calculus.

Two special projects in mathematics warrant particular mention: Unified Science and Mathematics in the School (USMES) and the Rand McNally Pilot Program. The first, operable in 11 schools, continued to involve students in real life problem-solving situations. Additional emphasis was laid this year on the development of USMES Lab Centers. Centers were set up in seven schools through National Defense Education Act (NDEA) funds which permitted the acquisition of laboratory materials. The Rand-McNally Program involved one elementary school in each of the six regions. Rand McNally publishers supplied one class group in grades K-6 with a complete set of mathematics textbooks and related functional materials. Their purpose was to enlist the cooperation of teachers and students in an assessment of their program in terms of its adequacy, appropriateness, and special strengths. Feedback would provide the data source for planned revisions.

The school system, in step with other school districts around the country, has begun to prepare for the nation's planned conversion to the metric system. The introduction of the "language of metrics" into the curriculum as a multidisciplinary thrust has already begun. The official posture of the District of Columbia Public Schools with regard to the eventual changeover from the "customary" (English) to the metric system was spelled out in a Board of Education policy statement and a Superintendent's directive (May 1976) noting that "conversion to the metric system from prekindergarten through grade 12 is projected over the next four years. [Metric] instruction must be systematically integrated into the total educational program."

Literacy in numbers, numeracy if you will, is, like reading, fundamental to all social processes. And students if they are to achieve a quality of life approaching that of the American Dream must be comfortably familiar with the language of numbers. The school system's administration and staff seek realistically to bring all students, depending on their aptitude, near, on, or beyond normative levels in mathematics. The development of competency-based instruction described under Curriuclum is yet another tactical option toward that end.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The District of Columbia Public Schools subscribes to the theory that the preschool years are the most important period of learning in the child's life. A tremendous amount of learning takes place during these years, learning that is the foundation for all subsequent learning. While learning is rapid and relatively facile in the early years, it becomes much slower and more difficult with increased age. An adequate learning environment is therefore crucial inasmuch as it is easier to acquire new behaviors than to discard or replace old behaviors.

It was around this philosophical orientation that early childhood activities were carried out during the school year, activities which sought to promote early development of the basic skills, lessen learning disabilities and reduce the need for remediation. Coordination with the services of Special Education and the Pupil Development Centers is recognized as an imperative condition of successful early childhood programs. The following are representative of such programs:

REGULAR PREKINDERGARTEN

Parent participation and training are primary to the program designed for four-year-olds. The half- or whole-day sessions offer children opportunities to form concepts from real life experiences.

REGULAR KINDERGARTEN

This program provides a more formal curriculum designed to increase the children's attention span, engage them in solving more complex problems, and provide socialization experiences with small and large groups.

ANACOSTIA PRESCHOOL

An all day, year-round activity, the Anacostia Community Preschool is a Headstart program which seeks to nuture disadvantaged children to the stage where they can begin their formal schooling at the normative levels of non-disadvantaged children.

REGION VI PRESCHOOL

As a comprehensive effort for preschool children in poverty areas, this activity provides health and social services as adjuncts to the instructional program.

MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL

Based on the belief that the environment in the early childhood years affects intellectual potential, the Montessori method incorporates, within a framework of freedom, activities which lead to inner discipline and encourage intellectual competence. (John Burroughs Elementary School)

FOLLOW THROUGH

Designed for educationally deprived children in the primary grades, the program provides, along with instruction, nutritional, health, psychological, and social services. (Nichols Avenue and Morgan Community Schools)

GOOD START

The project has two components, preschool and primary, for exceptional (handicapped) children. Its major goals are optimal success for each child and mainstreaming.

. . shaping the formative years

PREKINDERGARTEN EXPANSION PROGRAM (ESEA Title I, Part C)

This program, which in most participating schools is meshed with the regular prekindergarten and/or kindergarten, stresses language development as a crucial factor in helping the child to form concepts and to perceive and respond effectively to the world about him.

DISTAR

As an instructional method, DISTAR focuses on student response, immediate feedback, positive reinforcement, motivation and parental involvement. Phasing the DISTAR approach into some 18 schools was begun this year.

ENRICHMENT THROUGH RADIO

The program, which emphasizes development of language facility, features two-hour morning broadcasts (WGTS/FM) Monday through Friday to preschools, day care centers, kindergarten and elementary school classrooms.

COMPUTER PROGRAM

This Ludlow-Taylor program uses "The Turtle," a robot, as a learning strategy.

LOGAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL COTTAGE NURSERY

The nursery serves 40 children, ages two to four, and operates Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Because learning occurs through various sensory media, the Public Schools' early childhood program employs, as will have been noted above, many instructional modalities. All are planned to focus on the individualized needs and interests of the child.

Early childhood education stresses learning by doing.

Children are intent on learnin

DISTAR

keys to the language.

STUDENT SERVICES

The regular educational program is supported by a variety of satellite activities designated as pupil personnel services which range from testing to counseling, from communicative therapy to attendance and work permits. They are concerned essentially with student needs and interests which cannot or may not for whatever reasons be dealt with in the classroom setting.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

One of the paramount goals of Guidance and Counseling has been to provide leadership in improving the flow of services to students through coordination with the Department of Career Development Programs. The career advisors and guidance counselors have participated jointly in staff development. Implementation of the Operational Plan for Career Development Centers involved the cooperative efforts of guidance counselors, career advisors, teacher coordinators, and job developers.

To provide counseling and guidance relative to the educational progress of the student has been an additional goal of the guidance and counseling program. Toward this end, a Uniform Letter of Understanding was developed to be used in the counseling of 9th and 12th grade students regarding promotion and/or graduation requirements. This procedure will insure that appropriate adjustments are made, where possible, to alert students to their graduation deficiencies in time to erase them.

Among the outstanding programs were the Guidance Symposium at School Without Walls, a series of instructional and panel discussions, debates, field trips and films focused on subjects of vital concern to students; the Schools on the Hill Program, a two-year project involving the staff of Young, Browne, Phelps and Spingarn in a coordinated effort to improve the quality of education of the students; Skill-A-Week Project at Macfarland, designed to improve the reading skills of the entire student population; and at Langdon, Decision for Life: Experience the Future, which involved the staff in developing strategies for introducing and implementing career education into the total curriculum.

PUPIL APPRAISAL

Pupil Appraisal continued its focus on criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced tests, i.e., testing students at their academic functioning level in mathematics and reading as a means of ascertaining their strengths and weaknesses for instructional purposes. In September 1975 schools had the option to administer those levels of the Prescriptive Reading and Mathematics Tests that most nearly matched the students' anticipated instructional levels.

Instructional level testing was repeated in Spring 1976, and these results were reviewed at organizational workshops held for regional testing for Fall 1976. These workshops examined the criteria by which teachers would determine instructional levels of students within class groups for test administration purposes and the range of test levels appropriate for class groups.

An ad hoc testing committee comprised of regional, departmental and union representation was convened to plan the SY 77 Testing Program. A major concern of the committee was the lack of a testing program in grades 10 and 12. Recommended by the committee and approved by the Superintendent is the following SY 77 testing program:

1. Criterion-referenced testing in reading and mathematics, grades 1-9, Fall and Spring;
2. Achievement testing, reading, mathematics and study skills, grade 10, Fall;

. . . broadening student supports

3. Aptitude testing, grade 8, Spring;
4. Achievement testing on 10% sample basis, reading and mathematics, grades 1-9 and grades 10 and 12, Spring.

SPEECH CORRECTION AND HEARING

During the school year, the staff of the Speech Correction and Hearing Branch in the regions screened all kindergarten, second and seventh grade students and all other referrals for communicative disorders. Of the 23,171 students who were screened for communicative disorders, 6,485 were identified as potentially handicapped and were further assessed. Some 5,562 students were determined to have communicative disorders and in need of service. The 5,562 students who were assessed as having disorders were added to the number of students who were carried over from the previous year. At present, approximately 7,200 students are receiving services to meet their individual needs.

No standard program model for the delivery of comprehensive speech, hearing and language services was in operation in the regions. However, a comprehensive program including uniform screening, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, standardized definitions and model therapy plans were developed for implementation in Region V. In addition, two other regions have begun to adapt the Region V model for their use.

APPEALS

The school system is acutely aware of its obligation to uphold the rights of due process of students and their parents. The Appeals Office has helped to fulfill this obligation by, among other things, administering the logistical aspects of special placement and disciplinary hearings governed by the Mills Decree and Board Rules; on May 17, 1976 the logistical procedures for Mills hearings were transferred to the D. C. Government Hearing Office.

In FY 76 over 500 requests for hearings were received. These requests resulted in more than 375 hearings. In 81% of these cases, the school system's position was upheld. Requests for hearings which were not finalized by hearings were either abandoned or the requests were withdrawn by parents who received satisfaction without formal hearings.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND WORK PERMITS

During the past year, the Attendance staff worked with school personnel, community and public and private agencies to improve school attendance of pupils who had been excessively absent. Volunteer parents assisted in the program and were awarded certificates for their services.

Truancy Prevention Week was observed from March 15-19, 1976 with the support of Mayor Walter Washington and the Board of Education. A two-day conference was held at the Martin Luther King Library with speakers and panelists from the City Council, Board of Education, Juvenile Branch of the Superior Court, Social Service Agencies, Metropolitan Police Department, and the school system. Programs for truancy prevention at the local school level were initiated which continued for the remainder of the semester.

A newsletter, Focus on Attendance, was published and distributed to school staff for the first time with contributions from Attendance staff describing programs at their assigned schools.

Some 14,637 requests for investigation of absence were completed. Of this number 5,476 pupils were charged with truancy and referred to the Juvenile Branch, Superior Court.

Child labor inspectors supervised the issuance of work permits to eligible minors between the ages of 14-18 in the District of Columbia to insure protection for the youth's welfare in his work environment. From July 1975 to June 1976, some 23,463 work permits were issued.

CHILD AND YOUTH STUDY

Child and Youth Study prepared the coordination and implementation plan for the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect for the school system.

An ad hoc committee was formed, made up of representatives from the regional school psychological and social work staff, the branch chiefs of the department, and the Division of Instruction. Contact was made with significant community resources including the Corporation Counsel, Metropolitan Police and the National Center for Child Abuse at Children's Hospital as well as other school systems that have implemented training programs for their employees on the issues of identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect cases.

The ad hoc committee report—which outlines procedures for school personnel to use in reporting suspected child abuse and neglect cases, as well as a timetable for staff development activities on the topic of identification of the abused and neglected child—has been submitted to the Superintendent for approval.

In response to the request for proposals from the Office of Child Development, H.E.W., for demonstration training programs, a second committee was established to review the demonstration training modules and write a proposal seeking funds to support the implementation of a demonstration training project in the schools. The demonstration grant application was submitted to H.E.W. for review and the notification of grant award was received June 24, 1976. The grant was funded as of August 1, 1976 through July 31, 1977.

In collaboration with the Division of Special Education, the Child and Youth Study Branch criteria for eligibility for the various special education programs were drafted. Guidelines to determine psychological report content as well as test batteries appropriate for the assessment of the various disability areas were disseminated to the regions for use in the summer testing programs.

In connection with the Mills Decree 20-day deadline for student assessment for special education services, monitoring procedures were designed and put in place whereby all students referred to Child and Youth Study at the regional level are reported to the Central Records Office on a bi-weekly basis.

Child and Youth Study anticipates increasing demands for its services as a result of P.L. 94-142, which requires non-discriminatory testing, the design of educational prescriptions, and annual assessment of all children in special education programs. A further factor will be the action of the Board, also addressed in P.L. 94-142, which over the next three years extends eligibility for school attendance for the handicapped to cover the ages of three to twenty-one.

An assessment program in selected State schools was implemented June 17-30, 1976 based on a proposal written by Child and Youth Study and funded partially from federal money. Students assessed by 18 psychologists working with two school social workers were enrolled in Military Road, Richardson Annex, Lenox Annex and Mamie D. Lee Schools. School selection criteria included special school enrollment, inappropriateness of current placement, time since last individual assessment, and amount of funding available.

Career awareness begins at the elementary level.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT . . . anticipating future shock

Among the most vital processes of instructional planning and implementation is that of curriculum development. It is an essentially continuous process in which the curriculum evolves to keep pace with the evolution of social phenomena which, according to Alvin Toffer, threaten us with present and future shock.

During the summer of 1975, as in previous years, large numbers of teachers and supervising directors participated in developing, editing and revising curriculum guides. Some representative titles were "A Curriculum Guide for Elementary Age Hearing Impaired Students"; "Guidelines for Elementary Science"; "Concepts of Living"; "Energy: Past, Present, Future"; "Guide for Student Government"; and "Biology Curriculum, K-12."

THE COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM

In the fall of 1975 a Curriculum Advisory Committee was set up to develop a "systemic" curriculum. The outcome of that assignment was "A Design for a Competency-Based Curriculum," the generic document which will serve as a guide for the development of subsequent curriculum publications. Curriculum writers in the summer of 1976 were, in fact, to use it as a reference in developing first drafts of new guides in the areas of reading and mathematics. Curriculum drafts in other subject fields already on the "drawing boards" will be reviewed in terms of the competency-based curriculum approach.

The competency-based curriculum, as conceived by the school administration, is one which focuses on performance tasks, the measurable things students are expected to do, and skills acquisition and development. These skills may be classified as analytical, communicative, social-political, consumer-producer, and self-actualizing. The operant assumption behind this curriculum approach is that scholastic achievement and successful living depend, to a significant degree, on mastery of these skills.

Administrative and programmatic steps have already been taken to install this curriculum concept into the instructional program, most notably the setting up of an instructional team, a coordinating team, and an *ad hoc* implementation team. Although each team has specific functions, collectively their efforts aim at building and maintaining, in the various subject areas, a well-wrought competency-founded curriculum.

Curriculum development involves not only the kinds of activities noted above. It includes as well the introduction of brief modules, produced inside the system or by outside agencies, for special events. An example would be the crossword game, "Puzzled about the Candidates," published by the Public Library and disseminated to classroom teachers for use during this Presidential election year. Also having special curriculum implications was a Stick Up for Breakfast Program, which sought to increase awareness of good nutritional habits.

In line with the national trend toward the development of metrication programs and materials and in rapport with a Board of Education policy statement on the subject, efforts have been initiated to incorporate metric units in the curricula of such subjects as mathematics, science, physical education, and vocational education.

Anticipating the transition to a national metric system, as well as other equally profound changes in American culture, our curricula can soften and accommodate the impact of social change.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

. . . nurturing success

Lunch can be a pleasant surprise!

Research has thoroughly demonstrated that the dietary habits of children have a significant effect on their intellectual and social behavior in the classroom. The school system, very much aware of nutrition as a contributing variable to scholastic success, places heavy emphasis on food service delivery to its students.

The Food Services Department continues to be a forerunner in child feeding programs in the United States. In addition to feeding children enrolled in District of Columbia Public Schools, the department serves as the State Agency for both Child Nutrition Programs and Surplus Food Programs in all private and parochial schools in the District of Columbia.

LUNCH PROGRAM

During the 1975-76 school year, about 76,000 students in 194 schools received a balanced lunch. Approximately 52,000 of these students received lunch at no charge, while the others paid between 20 and 40 cents for a meal, depending on family income as specified by the Secretary of Agriculture.

SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM

In an effort to improve the nutritional intake of Public School students, the Special Milk Program was operated in all the schools. Through this program, half pints of milk were offered to students free or at a cost of 5 cents. The charge was determined by family income.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The school system has been recognized nationally as a leader in school breakfast programs. Based on a percentage of enrollment during the 1975-76 school year, the system had the highest percentage of breakfast participation of any major city in the United States. In 1975, District of Columbia Public Schools became the first school system in the United States to develop and implement a hot preplated breakfast program in schools without cafeterias. An average of 23,000 breakfasts are served daily.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Educating students in nutrition and improving their eating habits is a major concern. In 1975, the Food Services Department, supported by a $250,000 grant from the Kellogg Company, sponsored a nutrition teaching and breakfast awareness project in all elementary schools. The project was a first instance of major cooperation between a public education system and a commercial firm. The "Stick Up For Breakfast" project incorporated the support of all elements of the school system, the community, and the electronic and print media into one major effort directed toward improving the quality of life and elevating classroom performance through improved eating habits. As a part of this program, 81 students were flown to Disney World for two days as winners of a breakfast song contest. In addition to this project, the Director of Food Services and several staff members were the chief narrators in a nutrition education film, produced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, for distribution to all state departments of education in the United States and the Trust Territories.

Children learn that a good breakfast is a balanced breakfast.

OVERALL IMPROVEMENTS AND RECOGNITION

During 1975-76, the Food Services Department was cited for the second consecutive year for its high sanitation standards. Over 95 percent of all cafeterias were consistently rated above 85 percent on sanitation inspections conducted by the Environmental Services Administration of the District of Columbia.

Also during the year, 27 junior and senior high schools have been refurnished with modern cafeteria tables and chairs. Seven of these schools have received commercial style booths. In addition to modern furniture, the new Shaw Junior High School has been equipped with an ultra-modern circle-serve rotating cafeteria counter, the first to be installed in a public school in the United States.

The Food Services Department of the Public Schools continues to be a national leader in child feeding, and serves as an example of sound innovative child feeding for many other school systems.

ADULT and CONTINUING EDUCATION

The role of adult and continuing education is forcefully perceived in an imposing statistic: approximately 20,000 students regularly attend the school system's adult education programs, one third of whom are between 16 and 21 years of age. Such figures suggest the need for education programs which offer second, third or more life chances to students who are either beyond or unable to attend the regular high school.

The language of numbers indicates the scope and appeal of adult and continuing education. More than 400 adults were graduated from the eighth and twelfth grades; another 300 received recognition from the Adult Education Demonstration Center (AEDC). The Armstrong Adult Center certified 293 students as proficient in such skills as auto mechanics and body repair, barber science, dental technology, drafting, offset printing, and business technology.

This year's revised procedures, based upon an evaluation of the previous summer's program, offered some 12,973 students a well-balanced summer school experience. And the Urban Service Corps, in addition to providing academic tutoring and technical assistance to 100 junior and senior high students in the Biomedical and Health Careers Summer Employment Program, continued the Title I Clothing Program, volunteer coordination, and special services.

More recently the division has added an alternative project called the High School/College Internship Program (HI/SCIP). Offered in cooperation with Howard University, this program allows highly motivated seniors to earn college and high school credits simultaneously. The dual status—as fully matriculated students at Howard University and as seniors completing their high school studies—provides both challenge and reward to qualified students.

While serving over 2500 students for the year, the Americanization School prepared 75 foreign-born adults to receive citizenship papers, awarded attendance certificates to 218 day, 148 night, and 104 summer students. The Program of English Instruction for Latin Americans (PEILA)—encompassing English as a second language, acculturation, GED preparation, citizenship instruction, and social service counseling—offered assistance to the estimated 50,000 Latin Americans in the District of Columbia. In addition, more than 500 Viet Nam and Cambodian refugees were served by the Americanization School, PEILA and AEDC.

Allocation of funds from the State Plan (Section 309) for demonstration projects made possible the publication of a city-wide Adult Education Directory and the development of a consumer education package. The directory lists all adult education offerings, private and public, in the District of Columbia. The consumer education unit offers instruction on how to do a variety of home and family-related tasks that might otherwise be of mind-boggling complexity.

The division perceives one of its functions to be enlarging public and professional awareness of the increasing importance of adult and continuing education. Toward this end it hosted the Fall National Community School Workshop, which attracted well over 600 participants from 38 states, the District of Columbia, and three foreign countries. Articulating the theme "Community Education: Can It Make A Difference," the workshop forecasted greater applications of the community school concept by adult education program planners.

The Bicentennial Education Expo provided the occasion for looking at the past, present and future of education. From the perspective of "Adult Education—You Never Outgrow the Need," a conclusion was drawn that not only are people attracted more and more into adult education, but its offerings must continue to expand in order to meet their needs. Evidence of the trend may be noted in the fact that the 13 Adult Education Evening Centers, three major daytime AE Centers with their eight satellite ABE Centers, two ESL (English as a Second Language) Centers, and 18 Community School Centers have experienced an unprecedented surge in enrollment.

. . . it can make a difference

Adult education provides training in many skills, such as upholstering.

RESEARCH and EVALUATION

The proliferation of knowledge and outputs of global communication systems, shifts in population flow and permutations of social policy have obvious implications for research and evaluation functions. Collecting and organizing the resulting data into coherent "bytes" of information and evaluating them are necessary steps toward responsible decision-making. The task of developing the school system's primary decisional bases belongs to the Division of Research and Evaluation (R and E). What follows is indicative of the scope of its activities.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOAL I

In January 1976, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation developed an evaluation design to measure the accomplishments of the school system relative to Goal I established by the school administration in November 1975: "To raise the level of academic achievement by promoting the development in knowledge, attitudes, and psychomotor skills of every student in grades prekindergarten through twelve." The design was submitted to the Superintendent in February. It included evaluation objectives and rationale, a description of evaluation tasks and a schedule for their completion, and cost estimates for the purchase of instruments and data processing.

During May, division staff members administered a self-concept instrument to 1,411 students in 20 elementary schools, 18 junior high schools, and 8 senior high schools. A summary of that data is currently under review. It is projected that the evaluation report will be completed about the first of November.

EQUALIZATION

To meet the requirements of a Court decree to equalize the "per pupil expenditures for all teachers' salaries and benefits from the regular District of Columbia budget in any single elementary school" to within plus or minus five percent of the city-wide average, an Equalization Unit was established to carry out the procedures necessary to insure compliance. During the past year this unit, as part of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, collected data on teachers from the regional and personnel offices, data on membership from local schools, and held meetings with school principals. On the basis of this information adjustments were made in teacher assignments to bring schools into compliance. The report was submitted to the Court in November 1975.

COMPARABILITY

In the fall of 1975 the division prepared the FY 1976 Title I Comparability Report which was submitted to the Office of State Administration December 1, 1975. For the first time, the Equalization and Comparability efforts were closely coordinated. This resulted in a minimum of disruption in the local schools.

EVALUATION SYSTEM

During the school year 1975-76 two new machine-readable (classroom/student) data collection forms were developed to gather data in 34 elementary schools now included in the Evaluation System. Data from March through June 1976 included such items as

. . . developing bases for decision making

type of classrooms, type of teaching situations, grade levels, number of students for whom English is a second language, number of students on free and reduced cost lunch, total class memberships, teacher and teacher-aide start dates and absences, and availability of reading and mathematics resource teachers. The data also included for each student: his/her name, date and type of entry into class, sex, birthdate, I.D. number, absences, and dates and types of discharges for those who left class after September 1975.

A new reading program form was used to collect information during May and June 1976 on each student's reading program. The data ranged from the level of materials used with each student to the reasons for using particular materials and the student's need for extra help in reading. Information on student referrals due to learning problems was also collected.

Also during 1975-76, data collected during school year 1974-75 in 44 elementary schools were processed, analyzed and prepared for feedback in a series to the Superintendent, regional superintendents, principals and teachers. The first feedback was in the form of a reading profile for each of approximately 22,000 students in the Evaluation System (ES). The second displayed percentage tables comparing students in each school with students in the 44 schools on such variables as interest in reading, need for extra help in reading, sources of extra help in reading, and number of days per week extra help was received.

The third feedback provided comparative statistics on teacher absences and turnover rates by school and for all schools in the Evaluation System. The fourth presented comparative statistics on student absence and turnover rates by classroom, grade, school and for all schools in the Evaluation System. The fifth feedback laid out statistics on the number of ESL (English as a Second Language) students, the number of students on free and reduced cost lunch, the number of students referred for reading and mathematics help, and the number referred for behavior and physical reasons by classroom, grade level, school and for all schools in the Evaluation System. Each feedback enabled principals and teachers to compare their students, grade levels, classrooms, and school with those of the 44 schools in the Evaluation System on selected variables.

The administration's goal is to expand the Evaluation System to include, as soon as possible, all of the District of Columbia Public Schools. Through this systematic collection, storage and analysis of data, the Board of Education, Superintendent and others will have immediately at hand information necessary for the kind of decision-making that leads to sound educational programs.

RESEARCH INFORMATION CENTER

The Research Information Center (RIC) is a specialized resource in the Division of

Research and Evaluation designed to provide school personnel with information on curriculum development, proposal preparation, administration, research, and assessment in the field of education. The RIC also has the complete collection of ERIC (Educational Resource Information Center) indexes and microfiche. Computer capability, however, is presently not available but expected in the future. The close proximity to government departments and national associations located in Washington, D.C. enables the RIC to obtain the latest reports in education and related fields. The total number of searches conducted by a limited number of staff members during fiscal year 1976 was 1,081.

DATA RESOURCE BOOK: 1975-76

The Data Resource Book: 1975-76 is an official publication of the school system. It provides school staff and community with a readily available source of information about the Public Schools. In its fourth year of publication, the Data Resource Book offers a wide variety of statistical and narrative data on the school system, its students, employees, administration, and organization in an easily readable format. The FY 1976 edition is a Bicentennial issue.

FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Research and Evaluation provides two types of service to federally funded programs in the school system: management of contracted evaluations for specific projects and service through federally funded research and evaluation staff members who develop and execute the evaluation design for their respective projects.

An example of the first kind is the Title I Program, whose evaluation contract was awarded in November 1975. This evaluation report, incidentally, was presented in part at the 1976 American Educational Research Association meeting in April 1976. An example of the second is the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), which funds two research assistants in R and E to evaluate the four ESAA projects. The evaluation designs for these were completed in the spring of 1976.

PLANNING

The need for a comprehensive planning effort for the school system has been stated repeatedly. Due to budgetary constraints, however, it has not been operational in recent years. Realizing that such an effort can best be mounted by personnel whose primary assignment is planning, the Superintendent established in April 1976 a Division of Planning.

The function of the new division is to design, implement, and monitor a system-wide planning process; provide assistance to various units in planning programs and operations; and design, implement, and monitor a comprehensive educational facilities plan.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

. . . growth through participation

Professional competence is inextricably tied to continuous preservice and inservice training. Hence the District of Columbia Public School system's commitment to providing school staff with professional development opportunities.

Despite a city hall freeze on regular budget training funds in 1975-76, imaginative ways were found to offer school staff a variety of inservice activities. The summer of 1975 brought many teachers into reading, mathematics, and sociology courses required for certification to teach in the District of Columbia. Cooperative efforts between the school system, area colleges and universities, and community elements made possible workshops on consumer education; instructional leadership for elementary school principals; and student rights and responsibilities for students and teachers. There was also an executive seminar on computer applications in instruction.

These central office efforts have their counterpart effects at the local level, where each regional office has a staff development coordinator to direct intra-regional programs. Regional training activities not only were directed to systemwide priorities but were also attuned to regional and individual school needs.

Among the less visible aspects of staff development were those of distributing announcements of training programs offered by government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, facilitating the award of fellowships such as the Freedoms Foundation's summer study at Valley Forge, and coordinating activities that transcend purely regional interests such as orientation to the competency-based curriculum.

In addition to its inservice program, the department's preservice placement service coordinated, with area colleges and universities, the assignment of approximately 500 student teachers and practicum students. The spin-off of this program takes the form of tuition-free graduate credit courses for participating (supervising) teachers.

The Public School system recognizes that staff development programs provide for infusions of new ideas and educational approaches and that school people grow through participation in them.

SECURITY

. . . protecting people and property

Mayor Washington congratulates winners of fire poster contest.

Security, like its twin component Safety, requires the cooperation of all those persons who work in or relate to the schools. It cannot as a program be achieved and successfully maintained without the continued surveillance of the schools and their surroundings, without sound protective and investigative procedures. Needless to say, the Public Schools of the District of Columbia, like other large metropolitan systems, regards the security of person and property as an indispensable condition for successful schooling.

As evidence of this, one notes that from 1970 to the present the Security Office has expanded its staff from one director and a community aide coordinator to its present staff of 15 security officers and two secretaries. Some 117 community aides also work under the direction of the Security Office.

In the course of this year security personnel investigated 1,034 criminal incidents at Public School sites and cooperated with the Police Department in the investigation of 359 bomb threats to school facilities. They provided security at the school system's bicentennial exhibit at the Sheraton Park Hotel; at basketball and football regular season and championship games, track meets and such evening activities as school dances and community board meetings.

More routine duties of the Security Office were to protect personnel transferring funds from schools to commercial banks and conducting security surveys of school buildings.

Just as importantly, Security helped the Police Department and American Red Cross develop the second annual Project Existence Program for youth; worked with the Community Task Force for the Safety of Children and Youth and the Police Department in searches for missing children; joined the Police Department in expanding the Officer Friendly Program within the schools; assisted the Corporation Counsel's Office with investigations of civil suits against the Public Schools; coordinated with the Police Department investigations of narcotics and dangerous drugs use in the school facilities; and developed a new identification card system for school employees.

As may be seen from the foregoing, considerations of security must necessarily enter into every aspect of school life. For it is only when students feel secure that they can concentrate on their schooling.

SAFETY

. . . minimizing the hazards

The chances of educational success are improved when the safety of students and school personnel is maximized. Adequate safeguards against physical harm and injury are a major concern of the school system and ways to improve and maintain them are continually under review.

First and foremost, a policy and procedures manual was developed. For the first time in the school system's history, health, safety, and security policies, duties, responsibilities, and activities were defined for administrators, teachers, students, and other interested individuals.

Most of the division's time was spent conducting health and safety audits, surveys, inspections and evaluations of schools and their related physical facilities. Over 100 schools were visited. As a result of these surveys, many actual and potential safety and health hazards were identified and eliminated; for example, improper storage of flammable and toxic chemicals, inadequate fire extinguishers, blocked fire exits, lack of playground maintenance, etc.

An important adjunct of these audits and inspections is the training provided administrators, teachers, students, and others who became directly involved through the Safety and Security Committee, thus gaining insight into the increasing need for good safety and health practices and procedures throughout the school environment.

A safety and health evaluation of the transportation of our students revealed an excessive number of minor collisions occurring within the past year. Sixty-one collisions had occurred by the end of June. Although no students were injured, the time expended in litigation and on repairs caused a great number of unnecessary expenditures for the school system.

"Driver Improvement" programs have been initiated. Such programs are analyzed and evaluated each year and improved for successive years. The programs consist of classroom instruction and hand-on-wheel training. A "Bus Simulator" to expose the driver to real-life situations is scheduled to be purchased.

The playground environment, according to the Consumer Products Commission, is the primary setting for many injuries to children. A study was completed within the past year of all school injuries incurred by students. Injuries on and off playground equipment numbered 251.

Statistical experience for previous years is not available. Playground injuries do not pose an unusual problem, however, considering the exposure of 125,000 children at play for an average of four hours per day, either supervised or unsupervised. Most injuries have occurred during unsupervised play.

The safety staff has been able to assist in the elimination of many physical playground hazards, i.e., vandalized equipment, installation of safety turf under impact areas, removal or repair of pitted surface areas, etc.

A steady rise of employee injuries does impose an increasing burden on the schools' total manpower resources (1973: 390; 1974: 723; 1975: 793). Serious injuries have been thoroughly investigated to prevent their recurrence. However, such investigations and analysis are not an adequate response to the number of job-incurred injuries. A continuous and vigorous safety training awareness program is being pursued throughout the system.

Safety is, of course, a collective responsibility shared by school staff, students, parents and community agencies and organizations. Entitlement to personal safety is as binding as the right to an education.

BUDGET and FINANCE

Among the most vital decisions school officials have to make are those concerned with the allocation of educational dollars. The District of Columbia is unique in the sense that several agencies influence the outcome of fiscal planning and, therefore, educational planning. The experience of FY 1976 illustrates the ramifications and consequences of budgetary decision-making.

Throughout fiscal year 1976, the District of Columbia Public Schools has encountered serious budget planning problems. The original request of the Board of Education for an operating budget in school year 1975-76 included $18 million in new and improved services. These services were denied by the Mayor in his recommendations to the City Council and were not subsequently restored. The loss of these enhancements has been felt throughout the school system.

The recommended funding level of $209 million presented by the Mayor to the City Council would have been sufficient to maintain the levels of service current at the close of the prior school year, in the face of several mandatory costs increases. This funding level was not approved by the City Council, however. In its action, ultimately sustained in Congressional committee actions, this mandatory funding level was reduced by some $8.5 million. Prior to the opening of the school year, the Board of Education determined the line-item reductions to be made to account for this major funding loss.

The budgeting system previously developed was able to accommodate these changes quickly and translate them into the control allotments to operating offices. In this way, the expenditure controls were such that Board decisions could be implemented and made effective. Later in the school year, the position control system was brought on-line for all permanent positions in the general fund, and this further served to bring the control of expenditures within the reduced budget limitations. Later enhancements to the payroll system made further improvements in the expenditure of available funding.

In spite of the installation of all of these control systems by the school system, the Mayor maintained a freeze on all expenditures, both personnel and non-personnel, throughout the fiscal year. Only the positions established at the outset of the school year were exempted from this freeze, and of over 600

. . . the impact of fiscal decisions

exemption requests submitted during the school year for support and administrative positions, less than 200 were approved.

As a result of these severe limitations on a budget already drastically reduced from minimal levels, the employment level of the Public Schools fell from the 10,700 authorized positions to a level below 9,800 at the close of the school year. The major impact of this position loss was felt in many support areas throughout all the local schools, including the school maintenance work force, and in the many administrative offices charged with direct support of the educational program.

As a result of this freeze on expenditures, the school system came to the end of the fiscal year with considerable unspent funds. With Congressional approval, the Board closed the fiscal year by reprogramming a portion of this available funding to support the expanded special education tuition program ($476,470), to reimburse the Department of General Services for its over-expenditures in maintenance of school buildings ($500,000), and to make an internal transfer of funds to support major changes in benefits legislation resulting in a larger requirement for agency contribution than previously budgeted ($635,120).

Even after these approved reprogrammings, the Public Schools closed the year with an additional $1.3 million in unexpended funds. There had been a previous commitment by the City administration and the City Council to permit the Public Schools to carry these funds forward into the interim quarter in support of additional one-time expenditures for improved automated systems, the repair of classroom equipment, the stockpiling of supplies and materials for the coming school year, and the development of improved evaluation and testing programs. In this way, the savings realized from the freeze, while they do not compensate the system adequately for the services lost during the school year, will nevertheless not be lost entirely to the improvement of the system.

The most remarkable budgetary fact in this fiscal year is that the budget for the entire year, which began July 1, 1975 and ended June 30, 1976, was not approved by Congress until the very last day of that year, June 30. Thus, the City had operated throughout the fiscal year without an approved budget.

Without this budgetary base, it has been even more difficult for the Public Schools to develop a projected budget for the subsequent fiscal year, since that budget would necessarily rest upon the approved budget of the prior year. Added to the confusion has been the conversion of the City accounting system from a fiscal year previously beginning July 1 to one now beginning October 1. The conversion has not only confused accounting and budgeting issues at this immediate point; it is clear that the establishment of such a fiscal year will make more difficult the planning and management of a system operating on a school year not compatible with the fiscal year.

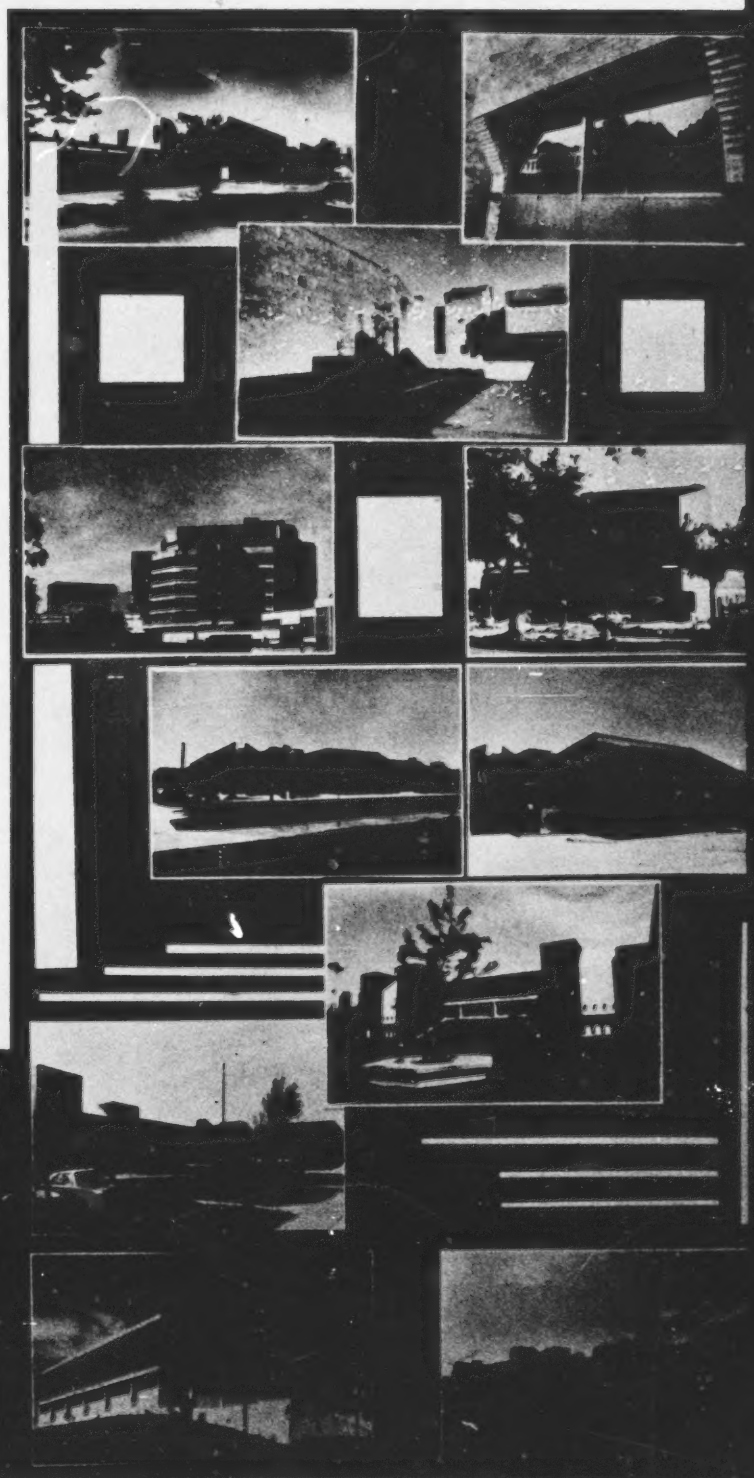
This difficulty, along with the many problems and shortcomings throughout the City's accounting system, especially as those shortcomings affect the Public Schools, was documented extensively by a survey report prepared by Arthur Andersen and Company for the Senate District Committee. The report was developed during the year by a large team of auditors from that company and was released as the fiscal year closed. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of that report will be implemented, and will be implemented in a way which will serve the best interests of the school system.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES . . . toward environmental quality

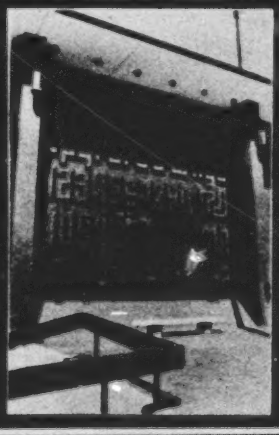
Because the physical environment has such a profound effect on instruction and learning, the school administration is always concerned for the development and maintenance of school facilities that are safe physically and emotionally well-planned.

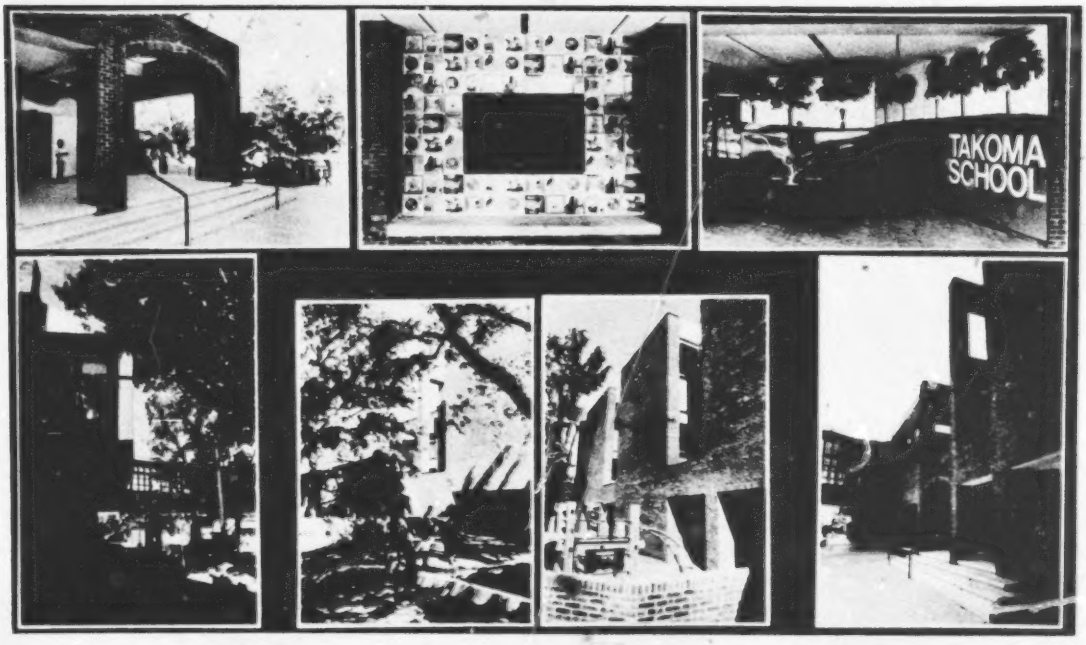
Toward this end, the Division of Buildings and Grounds operates over 200 buildings that house the 125,000 pupils and 10,500 employees of the District of Columbia Public Schools. Over the last two decades, as the City's school age population increased, Buildings and Grounds provided necessary space through new construction, leasing and temporary structures. In an era of declining enrollment, Buildings and Grounds is responsible for providing modern school space for all pupils while at the same time identifying and recommending (with other divisions) closure of unnecessary structures that drain resources from important educational programs.

In the past year, rental space has been reduced from 12 to 7 leases at a savings of $36,700; 96 temporary classrooms have been closed, saving $134,400 annually. In the same period two new buildings were added and four buildings were replaced or modernized. These new buildings are the Martha H. Winston Elementary School and the Friendship Elementary-Junior High Educational Complex. The Benning, Merritt, and Takoma Elementary Schools were replaced, and Bowen Elementary School was modernized.



School building design attempts to keep pace with instructional trends, e.g., flexible space, multi-grade level instruction and learning pods.





Building improvements varied widely and included new lunch and play areas, electrical modernization, rehabilitation of grounds, and boiler replacements. In other schools public address systems and air conditioning units were installed, roofs repaired, and exterior flammable material storage rooms added to eliminate fire hazards in buildings.

The annual repair budget for the Public Schools is $5.3 million. This figure has remained constant for the past five years while inflation has reduced the value of the dollar. Last year's deficit left only $4.0 million for work repairs.

This year, $6.1 million was spent for repairs. Repair funds are spent on the following major categories of items:

Supplies and materials	$ 398,000
General alterations	530,000
Heating and ventilation	500,000
Reconditioning and painting	865,000
Glazing	432,000
Plumbing repairs	211,000
Electrical repairs	231,000
Ground improvements	312,000
Floor repairs	208,000
Housekeeping	1,887,000

It should be noted, however, that an estimated $20 million is needed to bring Public School buildings up to safe and sanitary standards and, thereafter, $7 million annually for repairs to maintain the buildings.

Despite budgetary problems, increased emphasis on the environmental quality of the Public Schools has resulted in significant improvements as rated by the Department of Environmental Services (DES). Fewer major deficiencies were found in the Public Schools in 1975 than in 1974. Lighting deficiencies decreased 2%, heating and ventilation deficiencies decreased 9%, and plumbing deficiencies decreased 10%. While the improved environmental rating is an encouraging sign, the need for more repair funds is emphasized by the extent of problems reported in the DES survey: 45% of the buildings had obvious plumbing deficiencies; 44% had safety deficiencies, such as broken windows, rubbish on the playgrounds or improperly stored flammable materials; and 34% were deficient in basic sanitation.

The control on hiring imposed by the Mayor since July 1974, has required Buildings and Grounds to accept six new or expanded buildings with additional custodial staff to maintain only two of them. Few vacancies that occurred through normal attrition could be filled, increasing custodial vacancies from a normal of 50 to about 200 at the end of the fiscal year.

After the need for new construction or major modernization has been established, Buildings and Grounds assists in the development of architectural design specifications (scopes of work) that meet the stated educational needs of the users. These scopes are used to justify construction funding requests. This past year, Buildings and Grounds developed detailed specifications for: (1) a Prevocational/Vocational Center for the Handicapped requested by the Department of Special Education; (2) the conversion of Western Senior High School into a School for the Performing Arts; (3) the conversion of Randall Junior High into a senior high school; (4) the modernization and conversion of Bell and Phelps Vocational High Schools into Career Centers; and (5) the modernization of Eastern Senior High School.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION and LICENSURE

. . . insuring quality of performance

The education of the youth of this nation is an investment in human potentialities. Maximum growth and development of this potential is best insured through the efforts of highly qualified teachers. An important guarantee of qualified instructional personnel in the classroom was the issuance of five-year teaching certificates.

Through the process of certification, the means by which the teacher's eligibility for licensure is determined, we are able to assure that our schools are staffed by qualified personnel. During the 1975-76 school year an extensive review of the standards of eligibility for teachers and other educational personnel was conducted to make certain that those standards were responsive to the needs of our schools and, at the same time, compatible with national trends for teacher education and professionalism. As a result of that review, a complete revision of Chapter XVII, Rules of the Board of Education, was recommended: the updating of certification, the revision of existing licenses and the introduction of new licenses to support such programs as English-as-a-second-language, bilingual education, and adult education.

FIVE-YEAR TEACHING CERTIFICATES

The changing nature and needs of society make increasing demands on teachers to maintain the highest levels of competency and professionalism. Recognition of the need for continuous training and re-training was manifested in the legal requirement (Public Law 93-407, Section 204(a)) for the issuance and periodic renewal of the Five-Year Teaching Certificate. In accord with that requirement, initial Five-Year Teaching Certificates were issued during the 1975-76 school year to more than 7,000 TSA-15 employees.

IN-SERVICE COURSES

The regulations developed to govern the issuance and renewal of Five-Year Teaching Certificates encourage teachers to continue training by making special provisions for in-service courses. The regulations provide that in-service courses approved by the Board of Examiners can be applied toward certificate renewal, thus assuring that training will be responsive to the needs of teachers and supportive of improved instruction.

THE INTERSTATE AGREEMENT

In December 1974 Public Law 93-515 authorized the District of Columbia to enter the Interstate Agreement on Qualification of Educational Personnel. The agreement is a mechanism for standardizing teacher qualification requirements and provides a way of bridging differences in substantive and procedural matters among contracting states.

The agreement provides for the mutual acceptance of certificates issued by participating states, thereby abandoning the often cumbersome practice of certification by individual states. The agreement will greatly simplify the certification process and result in greater availability of trained educators.

At the present time the school system is in the initial phases of implementing the Interstate Agreement. The Professional Standards Committee reviewed the requirements of 23 states and ascertained that they were comparable to those of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia. The Superintendent in turn recommended to the Board of Education that a reciprocity arrangement be negotiated with these states. In the future, after the agreement has become fully operational, teachers who have been graduated from approved programs in contracting states will be considered eligible for certification by our system.

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